

123.
The Dying Christian's Triumph

IN A

LIVING REDEEMER

EXEMPLIFIED IN A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT SUTTON IN ASHFIELD,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

MATTHEW BUTCHER, JUN.

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, DECEMBER 10, 1777,

A G E D 22 Y E A R S.

BY *JOHN BARRETT.*

*But why more Woe? more Comfort let it be.
Nothing is dead, but that which wish'd to die.
Nothing is dead, but Wretchedness and Pain.
Nothing is dead, but what encumber'd, gall'd,
Block'd up the Pass, and barr'd from real Life.*

YOUNG,

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66

The Daily Chronicle & Westminster

LIVING REDEEMER

EX-MEMORIAL

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT SUTTON & ASHFIELD
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



ORGANISED BY THE

MATTHEW BUTCHER, JUN.

RECORDED THIS LIFE, DECEMBER 10, 1911

AGED 22 YEARS

BY JOHN BARRATT

THE LIVING REDEEMER
MUSEUM
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
LIFE OF THE LIVING REDEEMER

Young

Printed by J. Barratt, No. 2, Aldgate, London

And sold by John Barratt, Nottingham

A

S E R M O N, &c.

I A M now entering on the most painful employment in which I ever was engaged. The powerful feelings of friendship in busy exercise afflict my soul with the most oppressive sorrow. Unless restrained by an invisible hand, my overpowering passions will stop my mouth, and cause me to leave the pulpit in gloomy silence.

What encourages me to beg your interest for me at a throne of grace is a firm belief that the same sorrow is universal throughout this assembly; and I would therefore

therefore hope that, while you tenderly drop the tear of affection on your own account, you will fervently whisper a prayer on mine, that strength may be equal to my day, and utterance may be given me to improve this hour of distress by considering that portion of the divine word contained in

JOB, Chap. xix. Verse 25, 26, 27.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

When an old house is to be broken up, and a new one built in its place, the person who resides in it has warning from his landlord to remove, while the old habitation is taken down and another erected. Something similar to this is the situation of God's people in a dying hour. The natural body,
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that earthly house of this our tabernacle is then to be dissolved or taken down, in order that it may be built anew, and raised a glorious body. For a time therefore its tenant, the immortal spirit, must forsake her clay and leave her old habitation; and though the event frequently may come unnoticed, and the soul may make a sudden unexpected departure, this is very far from being always the case: some bodily complaint or another is usually sent to warn us of the momentous change, and intimate our approaching dissolution. Accordingly in this light it was that afflicted *Job* considered the painful disorder under which he now laboured. Though it was not followed immediately by his death, it informed him that the ghastly messenger was on the road, and warned him of his approach. In consequence of such a warning he utters the language of the text, which describes him in the realizing views of this gloomy scene. Similar were the views, and more explicit was the warning received by my dear departed friend. The complaint under which he laboured

laboured not only informed him (like *Job*) that he must die in some future period, but it told him in the language of certainty, the hour was at hand. He knew that there was but a step between him and death, yet instead of trembling before the pale destroyer, so dreadful to nature, with an undaunted courage he looked him in the face. He saw in him the countenance of a friend, and gave him a chearful hearty welcome. The reason was, almighty grace enabled him to behold a risen Saviour, and therefore, strong in faith, he could adopt the language of my text, and say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. Accordingly a paper found on the morning of his death, directed for me, and written just before his departure, expresses his desire that the verses I have read should be the foundation of my discourse on the present melancholy occasion.

These words may properly be styled a compendious body of doctrinal and experimental divinity. They contain the sum and substance of all divine revelation, while
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they breathe the very essence of the christian's experience, when faith is in lively exercise. The ideas with which they are fraught are so numerous, and the language so sublime, that in one discourse it is impossible to unfold all their beauties. I shall only therefore touch upon the several parts of my text, by collecting them together in the three following points of view.

I. A confession of mortality; *Though after my skin worms destroy this body; though my reins are consumed within me.*

II. A profession of faith; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.*

III. A declaration of hope; *Yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, mine eyes, shall behold, and not another.*

I. A confession of mortality; *Though after my skin, &c.* Death, considered only as a matter of speculation, is that important event which affords the most convincing testimony how greatly our nature is depraved. Its certainty is universally acknowledged

known, but the generality of mankind reflect on it with indifference, while each individual considers the dissolution of another more than his own. Indeed, to nature there is something so painful in the thought, that none but the real believer, under the influence of divine grace, can bear to indulge it. Such a one was the dear deceased, and therefore with *Job* he could utter the language I have read as expressive of the following particulars.

I. His realizing views of the natural consequences of death. *Though after my skin worms destroy this body.* The expression points to the remote consequence of nature's dissolution, and describes its most ruinous state. *Though after my skin worms destroy this body, (i. e.)* "After the pale
 "hand of death has changed my countenance, and the grave's cold damps have
 "penetrated my skin, putrified it, and
 "altered its whole appearance, *then worms*
 "*shall destroy this body.*" In such a state as this, the pleasure which once was felt by surviving friends is changed for disgust.

gust. The tenderest relative turns away his eyes from the loathsome object, while none but the worms embrace it with delight. Thus consuming in the grave the greedy reptiles feast themselves on the putrified carcase till they have devoured its last remains.

Such, says *Job*, will soon be the wretched condition of this my body. The word *body*, you may remark, is written in *italics* to intimate it is not in the original. When read without it, the expression is truly descriptive, and conveys the most lively image of the good man's situation. It represents him (as it were) pointing with his finger to his emaciated carcase, while he thus expresses himself, *Though after my skin worms destroy THIS*; so vile and despicable does it appear, that it hardly deserves a name, and it will soon be treated with suitable contempt, while every once lively member, every once active limb lie dormant in the grave, and are consigned to corruption. Another thing implied in this expression is,

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Idly.

IIIdly, the certainty of this event. *Though after my skin worms destroy this body.* You will observe in this expression death is not asserted, but implied. Job does not say that he shall die, but intimates his undoubted assurance of his death by taking it as a truth for granted. The fact was so indisputably true that it needed no proof, he therefore speaks of it in the same manner as though it was actually past. He realizes the dismal scene, as if the event had really taken place, and supposes himself in the humiliating situation described in the expression. *Though after my skin worms destroy this body.*

IIIIdly. In the words, *though after my skin worms destroy this body, and though my reins are consumed within me*, we have the reason of the certainty of his dissolution. Human depravity is the foundation upon which death hath raised its empire. The declarations of Scripture, and the mortality of those around us afford convincing arguments that its dominion is universal, and none are exempted from its destructive blow;

blow ; but these general reasons only discover the certainty of our dissolution in common with others, and are equally conclusive with respect to all mankind, but the particular cause of *Job's* assurance in the present case seems to be the peculiar circumstances he was now in as an afflicted man : these he expresses in verse 27. *my reins are consumed within me.* The dreadful disorder with which he was afflicted seemed to have eaten up his very vitals. The pains attending it enfeebled his whole frame, as introducing him to the chambers of death. Under his affliction he *felt himself mortal* ; he knew, if it continued, his dissolution must ensue, and read, as it were, the sentence of death within himself. Thus, *his reins being consumed within him* testified the certainty of death, and opened his eyes to see the hideous consequences that must necessarily follow. Such were his present circumstances as drew a veil over the face of nature, and rendered gloomy its brightest objects. The scene of futurity which they presented interposed and concealed from his view
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the splendor of all earthly delights. In such a state he was constrained to apply to heaven for relief, and absolute misery must have excited the groans of despair had not a divine friendship appeared on his behalf. To this therefore he applies for support and consolation, nor was his application in vain, as will evidently appear, if we consider,

Illy. A profession of his faith. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

These words evidently express what was the object of the faith of *Job*, and describe those essential characteristics in the person of Christ, which convince the enlightened soul, that it enjoys a suitable and all-sufficient Redeemer. It is a good observation which I remember to have had from an able divine, "Every sinner needs a Redeemer, "and every christian has one." A conviction of our being in the number of the former necessarily excites our desire to enjoy the blessedness of the latter. Thus it was in the case before us. *Job* was fully convinced

convinced of his own vileness, he was assured that sin was the cause of natural death, and he also knew that it exposed him to eternal death; considering himself therefore on this account as entirely lost and helpless the only source of his consolation was the method of redemption planned and executed by God himself. That this merciful scheme was revealed to him, and that he understood its nature is evident from the character by which he describes the object of his faith, as,

1st. He was a Redeemer, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* The objections that are urged to prove these words have no reference to the person of Christ are too trivial, and too plainly confuted by the whole strain of the text to need a particular attention on this solemn occasion. I shall only observe in general that the Hebrew word here used לְנִי contains an allusion to a well known custom observed under the ceremonial law (*viz.*) when a person was dead, whose estate was sold or mortgaged, the nearest surviving kinsman was to settle his concerns, and maintain
the

the honour of the deceased by redeeming the estate, marrying the widow, and raising up children to his name. We have an instance of this in *Ruth*, chap. 4. where *Boaz* is described as purchasing the estate of *Mablon*, and taking the wife of the dead to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. The reason of this transaction he acknowledges, in verse 12 of the former chapter, to be the relation in which he stood, when he says, *And now it is true I am thy near kinsman*. You will observe, it was this that qualified him for the business, and rendered him a suitable Redeemer. Now it is the very same word used in the text by which such a Redeemer is described. Christ bears the same title because he stands in a similar relation, and does the same kind service for his people.

1. He stands in a similar relation to them. Accordingly he is described in Scripture as our elder brother, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. On this account the right of redemption belongs to him in a legal way as the proper substitute of his people. When Christ hung
upon

upon the cross at *Calvary* the same nature which had sinned was then suffering, the threatenings of the divine law were thus fulfilled, the faithfulness of the law-giver was by this mean maintained, and justice received ample satisfaction. See this point argued by the apostle in Hebrews, chap. ii. from the 11th to verse 18th, "For both he that sanctifieth," &c.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ by his obedience and death accomplished the same important work for his people, and therefore may be stiled their kinsman, their redeemer. By the fall we had sold ourselves to work wickedness, and became the miserable subjects of sin, and vassals of Satan. Christ redeems the mortgage, restores the possession, and secures the eternal honour of those who are dead in sin. This he does in the same manner as *Boaz* did as to the estate of *Mahlon* (*viz.*) by paying its proper price. What this was you may see by reading I. *Peter*, chap. i. verses 18 and 19. "For we are
 " not redeemed with corruptible things, as
 " silver and gold, but with the precious
 " blood

“ blood of Jesus, as of a lamb without
 “ blemish and without spot.” Such was
 the price paid down for our redemption,
 the value of which can only be estima-
 ted by an infinite mind, as appears from an
 attentive reflection on the apostolic asserti-
 on, Acts xx. 28. “ Feed the church of
 “ God, which he hath purchased with his
 “ own blood.”

II. He was a living Redeemer. *I know
 that my Redeemer liveth.* This was Job's
 consolation, that there was not only a Re-
 deemer to appear in some future period,
 but that he was at that very instant actu-
 ally in being. If the existence of Christ
 was only to be dated from the time in
 which he took upon him our nature, then
 the Old Testament saints must have pe-
 rished for want of present relief. Job
 felt the weight of his guilt in such a
 manner, as convinced him he must sink
 under the enormous load, unless there was
 one to interpose with God in his behalf.
 This therefore we find was the matter of
 his wish in chap. xvi. verse 21. “ O that
 “ one

“one might plead for a man with God,
 “as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.”
 Divine grace taught him that such a one
 was ready for the work, whilst it led him
 to *Jesus*, the only mediator between God
 and man. This therefore was the matter
 of his rejoicing, when he says, in the
 words of our text, “I know that my
 “Redeemer liveth!” Observe, though
 Christ had not suffered, yet he was then
 in existence. What is more, he then
 lived as the Redeemer of his people. In
 this character he was set up from ever-
 lasting. Hence the believer derives all
 his consolation in the views of death.
 Christ is a life-giving head. He lives
 himself, and from him the springs of
 eternal life flow in endless streams to all
 his people. His character of a Redeemer
 intimates that compassion, care, and friend-
 ship, which he continually bears to his
 church. His living implies that he is
 at present, and will be in every future mo-
 ment continually engaged in the exercise of
 this his affection. As his love constrain-
 ed him to become our Redeemer by dying

for us, so it still influences him continually to act in the same character by living for us. "He ever liveth therefore says the apostle to make intercession for us, "Hebrews vii. 25." Consequently he is always ready at the right hand of God to interpose in our behalf; nor will he suffer any one concern of his people to pass unnoticed, any accusation against them to be successful, or any injury designed them to be accomplished.

How clearly does this discover the security of the child of God! To speak it with reverence, Christ would appear dishonorable under the character of a Redeemer, if, while he sustained it, one of his people was to be overcome by Satan, or perish under the influence of sin. Nor need we fear in the prospect of death, or tremble at nature's dissolution, since Scripture reveals a living Redeemer as the object of our faith. Though this body is imprisoned in the grave, crumbled into dust, and devoured by worms, not one atom shall be lost, but all its scattered particles shall be collected, and it shall
spring

spring forth incorruptible in immortal glory.

Christ lives as our Redeemer, and he discovers the glory of this his character by watching our silent remains, preserving them even in their corrupted state, restoring them to their union with the soul, and raising them superior to death and hell. Agreeable hereto is the inspired assertion, Hosea xiii. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death! I will be thy plague. O grave! I will be thy destruction.*

3dly. Christ is a victorious Redeemer. *He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.* This expression may refer both to Christ's incarnation, and also to his second coming without sin unto salvation.

The Old Testament saints lived in the full expectation of the first, and we wait for the glorious appearance of the last. The former has fully answered their believing views, and we doubt not the latter will exceed all our hopes. Consider-
ing

ing the words then as referring to the final advent of our victorious king they express that glorious manifestation which the last great day will make, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with an attending throng of mighty angels.

At present this character of a Redeemer is but little understood. The glories of his redemption are degraded, his enemies seem to triumph, while by the influence of sin they endeavour to prevent the advancement of his interest, and eclipse the excellency of his person and glory; but then every stain will be wiped off his character, and all his glories as our Redeemer will be fully displayed, and, having vanquished all his enemies, and accomplished the purposes of his grace, he will stand like a conqueror upon the field of battle, surrounded with the trophies of his victory, the acclamations of his people, and the honours of an eternal triumph.

Upon the whole then we may observe that our Redeemer's living, and standing
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the latter day upon the earth affords a clear display of the compleatness of his Redemption.

Christ would never have taken a place in heaven as the Redeemer of his people, if he had not been qualified for the work; he never would have ascended there to make intercession for them, if he had not perfectly accomplished it; and he never would appear the second time, unless the happiness of his people was infallibly secured, for when he cometh a second time it is without sin unto *salvation*. His future coming therefore supposes the perfect accomplishment of the redemption of his church by his first appearance. An assurance of the latter implies in it a certainty of faith with respect to the former, and therefore when *Job* says he shall stand the latter day upon the earth he intimates the satisfaction of his mind respecting the perfect performance of that salvation, to which the character of a Redeemer refers.

Such was the foundation upon which my dear departed friend built all his hopes,
and

and by which he was supported with comfort in the views of eternity. Accordingly the reason why he fixed upon this as his funeral text he has thus expressed by writing in the paper in which it was found, "For my Funeral Text,"

"*Job*, chapter xix. verses 25, 26, 27.
 "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and
 "that he shall stand at the latter day upon
 "the earth. And though after my skin
 "worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh
 "shall I see God. Whom I shall see for
 "myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and
 "not another, though my reins be consumed within me. It is this thought
 "which animates me above the fear of
 "dying. That Jesus died, and now he
 "lives, that before he expired upon the
 "accursed tree he could say, It is finished."

Such was the solid basis upon which our deceased brother rested all his expectations for an eternal world. I shall spend a few thoughts upon the nature of these expectations by proceeding to the next general proposition, which is

III. A

III. A declaration by *Job* of his hope.
*Yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall
 see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold,
 and not another.*

Nothing can more plainly discover the importance of the doctrines of grace than that blessed hope, which in their own nature they are calculated to inspire. Nor is there any thing can more strongly manifest the necessity of faith in this salvation than the delightful influence of its expectations upon the minds of the believer. We have an instance of this in the case of *Job*. Though one heavy affliction after another, like clouds involved in clouds, surrounded and darkened the whole sphere in which he acted, though the beating tempest poured down a flood of sorrow upon him, yet he possessed his soul in patience, and uttered the language of a triumphant pleasure. Ghastly death had thinned his family. Meagre poverty had stripped him of his possessions. Dire disease had emaciated his body, and pale famine had visited his habitation, but yet, though having nothing, he seemed to possess all things.

things. Faith in a living Christ forbids his fears, and therefore, with the gloomy horrors of the grave in prospect, he appears unspeakably happy. What made him so is evidently the assurance which is here expressed. "That because the
 " Redeemer liveth he should in his flesh
 " see God, whom he should see for him-
 " self, and his eyes should behold, and
 " not another." There are two things implied in the words as constituting the object of the hope of *Job*.

1. The resurrection of the body. *In my flesh I shall see God, and these eyes shall behold him.* This is the antidote against those painful sensations so naturally occasioned by the prospect of our dissolution.

" Corruption, earth, and worms,
 " Shall but refine this flesh."

The believers body is only debased, that it may be exalted. Faith in Christ looks forward to the delightful period, when it shall rise from the ruins of the grave, and be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

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The expression before us intimates the fameness of that body which the resurrection shall produce. Agreeable hereto is the inspired assertion, 1 Cor. xv. 38. "And to every seed his own body." "My flesh," (says *Job*) the very same which is now "so emaciated, and appears so loathsome." Though to my familiar friends it is an object of detestation, yet it is that which God delighteth to honour. "My eyes shall behold him." These very eyes which look upon the present world as a wilderness of sin and sorrow will soon be blest with the appearance of a victorious Redeemer, and the glories of a covenant-God.

II. *Seeing God* may imply his beatific vision. As God is the only source of perfect happiness to his creatures, so the sight of him is the mean by which this blessedness is communicated to the mind. *The angels always behold the face of their Father which is in heaven.* * It is this which makes them happy, And the clearer the view which

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faints

* Mat. xviii. 10.

saints upon earth obtain of the face of God the greater is their felicity. By the sight of God with our bodily eyes which is here spoken of is intimated the perfection of heavenly blifs, as infinitely superior to the enjoyment of a life of faith. The only way in which we behold God here is by faith. Now this implies a distance from the great object of our pleasure, *Job* therefore rejoices in the thought that there should be no more distance between God and man, but that he should see him face to face. In the present world, while we live by faith, we know nothing but by report: faith gives no more than a distant prospect, but that in heaven will be an immediate one. The views of faith are often obscured, but when in our flesh we shall see God, there will be nothing to interpose, not the least interruption of our intimacy, *for we shall know even as we are known.*†

The language of *Job* intimates the glorified state of the new raised body, *These eyes shall behold him.* At present they are
unable

† 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

unable to view the illustrious object. Its glories are so ineffably great that were they fully manifested, such is the weakness of our frame it would sink into ruin under the oppressive over-whelming display. *No man (says God) can see me and live. †* Accordingly, when *Moses* came down from the mount he was obliged to cover his face with a veil. The reflection of that splendor which was borrowed only from the inferior glories of Deity was too dazzling for the people to behold, “So that they “were afraid to come nigh unto him; §” but at the resurrection the case will be altered. *This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and what is sown in weakness shall be raised in power. †* The body will be endowed with a divine strength, and so be qualified to sustain the weight of that glory which it shall cheerfully possess. Then these very eyes, which now cannot bear the twinkling of nature’s sun, will steadily behold the full-beaming glory of him whose presence irradiates heaven. *We shall see God.* This sight will be both transforming

† Exod. xxxiii. 20. § Exod. xxxiv. 30. † 1 Cor. xv. 43, 53.

transforming and transporting. It will transform us into his perfect image. "*We shall be like unto him, for we shall see as he is.*"§ We shall then also be freed from all that imperfection, released from that dullness and carnality, delivered from that blindness and corruption which now constrain us to groan earnestly being burdened. Thus every cause of our complaint will be removed, and we shall be transported with the vision and enjoyment of God, *whom we shall see for ourselves and not another. See for ourselves*, that is behold our interest in him; see him that we may enjoy him. The Lord is our portion, and this portion we shall then fully possess. The saint will claim a share in all the glories of the divine nature. Delightful thought! while in intimate communion he sees all things in God he shall enjoy the vast inheritance, and with transporting pleasure say, "All this is mine for ever."

The manner in which this sight is obtained you will observe is through the person

§ 1 John, iii. 2.

person of Christ. This is intimated by the expression, *in my flesh*, that is, with my bodily eyes, *I shall see God*: now a spiritual being is not a suitable object for corporeal sight, and therefore the sentiment of the great Dr. Owen upon this subject seems both rational and scriptural, namely, that “A view of the glory of Christ is subordinate unto the ultimate vision of the essence of God.” The Redeemer therefore in his complex person will be to eternity the only mean of communication between God and the church. It is this object, the glorified body of Christ, as subsisting in the Godhead, which will be the medium of their knowledge, while it feasts the eyes of the countless multitude who surround the throne of God and the Lamb.

Application.

Hence observe,

I. The deity of Christ.

Seeing the Redeemer is seeing God, because in him all the riches of infinite perfection are treasured up to be communicated

ed to the church. A treasure which no finite mind could possibly contain. The capacity of the most exalted Archangel in heaven is too limited to contain the glories of that perfection which is absolutely immense; while these glories are therefore displayed in the person of Christ they prove his immensity, and thus render his Deity indisputable.

2. Hence learn the necessity of an interest in Christ. Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel, but there is no enjoying the former, or being happy in the latter, without an interest in *Jesus*.

Sin having polluted our souls has corrupted our bodies, and we are as unable to cleanse the former from guilt, as to extract from the latter the seeds of our dissolution. The one must certainly feel the influence of temporal death, and the other will as certainly be tormented with the agonies of eternal death, if Christ is neglected and his righteousness refused.

Job had nothing to support him in the prospect of his dissolution but the hope
of

of seeing God, and he had nothing to support this hope but a knowledge of, and dependance upon a living Redeemer. Thus also it was with my dear departed friend. He had no other expectation of future happiness in his dying moments, but what arose from the compleat redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was revealed to him as a foundation secure as omnipotence could make it. It bore up his spirits when death entered his chamber, and the grave seemed open to receive him.

Helping to undress him last Lord's-day evening, I asked him whether he expected the restoration of his health, or was apprehensive that the present disorder would end in his dissolution? he answered, he was certain of the latter; I replied, under the influence of this thought, that you shall surely die, are you happy in your mind?—Yes, said he, perfectly happy—When I returned, whence does your happiness arise? his strength was so exhausted with getting into bed, that he could only desire me to stay for a reply, while
he

he paused for want of breath. I waited for a time in silent expectation; when he began as near as I can recollect, in the following words.

“ I am sensible that I have nothing in
 “ myself to excite the divine favour, or
 “ merit the compassion of God.— Was he
 “ this moment to send me to the hottest
 “ hell, and punish me with eternal tor-
 “ ment the punishment would not be
 “ too severe: I am fully convinced it
 “ would be equitable. I am sensible the
 “ righteousness of Christ is sufficient to
 “ cover all my guilt, and that on his ac-
 “ count God can be just while he saves
 “ me. This is all my plea. From this
 “ arises all my hope. I lie at the foot of
 “ the cross. I know God can save me;
 “ I believe he will.”

Thus was he favoured in his departing moments with the manifestation of heavenly friendship, and rendered happy by the discoveries of redeeming love. I mention not this circumstance to raise his character, or to increase that universal esteem which when living he possessed, I
 only

only mention it to exalt the riches of that grace, by which he was delivered from the fears of death, and to which he ascribed all the honours of his *salvation*.

Accordingly, speaking of the doctrine of election the *Monday* preceding his death, he said to a friend who visited him, "What should I now do if this doctrine was not true? The apprehension would render me compleatly miserable. O how painful my situation now, if it was not a certain affair, but depended upon any thing to be done by me!—But, 'tis this thought which satisfies my mind in the views of death; my salvation was begun without my knowledge, and contrary to my inclination; it was carried on without my aid, and perfectly finished without my assistance."

Upon this redemption he boldly ventured his soul for eternity, while he acknowledged it all of grace.

3. Hence learn, that the only way to obtain the same favour is by faith in the same Redeemer. It is not sufficient that the Son of God sustains this character, un-

less we are the objects of his redeeming love.

Now if the word of this redemption does *not profit them that hear it*, the Apostle affirms it is *because it is not mixed with faith.*† *If we receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those that are sanctified, it is by faith in Christ*, as our Lord himself assures us.‡ While therefore we deny the efficacy of his righteousness, by depending on our own performance and seeking justification by the works of the law, we are rejecting him as a redeemer. And say, poor unbelieving sinners, what can you do without him? As a dying man I would beseech such to be reconciled to God. You believe that soon you must go the way of all flesh, do then for a few moments realize the thought of your dissolution. Your bodies are crumbled to atoms, and eaten by worms, but their scattered particles will certainly be preserved, and at the last great day collected together, but if Christ is not your redeemer, who is to raise them glorious bodies? If while living you have never given yourself up to him, when dead you will

† Heb. iv. 2. ‡ Acts xxvi. 18.

will be considered as none of his, and at the resurrection he will disown you, and make this awful declaration to you, *I know you not, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.** Suppose the dying moment arrived, and your immortal soul taking its flight into eternity. You must now appear before the judgment seat of Christ, but how will you look him in the face, when your own righteousness has been preferred and his neglected? How gloomy will be your prospect in such a situation? May the Lord the spirit affect you with it now in such a manner, as shall constrain you by faith *to fly to Jesus for refuge!*

Death's terror is the mountain *faith* removes,
 'Tis faith disarms destruction, and absolves
 From ev'ry clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.
 Believe, and show the reason of a man;
 Believe, and taste the pleasures of a God;
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.

YOUNG.

4thly. We may hence learn the excellency of an assurance that we are interested in Christ. While mankind would not venture half their worldly substance in any scheme

* Mat. vii. 23.

scheme which they had not good evidence would succeed, they willingly venture their immortal souls, their eternal happiness with dark uncertainty, destitute of the least evidence of their safety. With how many is this the melancholy case? Or how many are there who foolishly raise their hopes without any foundation, and indulge a blind expectation which is void of all support? What confusion will fill the minds of such, when their eyes are open by death, and they see themselves exposed to the wrath of an eternal God, destitute of any shelter, any hope? Hence my dear friends, learn the necessity of a continual inquiry what is your state towards God. Swift as a post you are daily hastening to an eternal world. Let conscience hourly put the question, "Am I travelling to the dark regions of endless torment? or am I daily approaching the gates of immortal light and blessedness?" The importance of such an inquiry appears from the realizing views of a dying moment. 'Tis then we shall feel the necessity of having made *our calling and election sure*.^{*} Supposing we really

^{*} 1 Pet i. 10.

really are safe, yet to be in the dark in that moment is to suffer awhile the torments of the damned.

Ye drowsy professors! the death-bed of my dear friend calls loudly upon you, and in awful language reads the most important lecture. It tells you eternity is upon the wing, and calls your attention to an endless duration. *The day is far spent, the night is at hand, let us put off the works of darkness, and put on the whole armour of light.*†

The dear deceased knew the importance of this assurance to which I am now pressing you. In his dying moments he appeared a lively instance of the possibility of attaining it, for then he enjoyed that solid comfort which it affords, while he could say with *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. It was this which composed his mind, and inspired his heart with joy. Nor was his joy the effect of agitated spirits or fluctuating passions, but the result of a calm reflection upon his state towards God, *as not having on his own righteousness which is of the law, but clothed with the righteousness of Christ which is by faith.*§

† Rom. xiii. 12. § Phil. iii. 9.

The frame of his mind is best described by himself in a paper found in his pocket the night preceding his death, of which the following is an exact copy. — “ The following thoughts occurred to me, when death appeared in prospect. They contain my hopes and my fears at a time I had not the least expectation of life. In short I found such reflections of infinite service. My mind became more unbent from terrestrial things. The world vanished, and my happiness was derived from objects unseen and eternal. I could converse familiarly with death and eternity. I could strictly examine the dark dungeon of my own heart. I could read my Bible with more earnestness and pleasure, as I considered myself interested in every sentence ; and, when faith was in exercise, I could say, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*. I was happy in myself, and happy in the thoughts of my approaching dissolution.”

Thoughts on DEATH and ETERNITY.

“ I see the hour approach, th’ important hour,
 “ And death commission’d, ready to devour ;

“ Now

“ Now med’cine fails, and phyfic cannot save
 “ From death’s black horrors, and the rav’nous
 grave.

“ Reflect, my soul, and think what ’tis to die :
 “ One fatal stroke dissolves the tender tye :
 “ Tir’d with it’s prison, cumber’d with it’s clay,
 “ The long-imprison’d spirit soars away.

“ Now skulls and coffins open to my view,
 “ The yawning grave close by the baleful yew,
 “ Confin’d to dwell within the hollow ground,
 “ While worms, and bones, and spectres me fur-
 round.

“ And can we view thy trophies, death, nor fear ?
 “ Feel life decay, nor drop a silent tear ?
 “ Methinks a few more days will end the strife :
 “ Death hovers near to snap the thread of life.

“ But rise, my soul, and all the world resign,
 “ *Jesus* appears with marks of blood divine :
 “ I plead that blood ; my prophet, priest and king,
 “ The grave lies conquer’d, death has lost its
 sting.

“ Then earth farewell, thou flattering world adieu :
 “ Sublimer pleasures open to my view :

“ Of

“ Of joys substantial is my soul possess,
 “ And songs of angels fire my raptur’d breast.”

The whole strain of his discourse with me was exactly coincident with the sentiments here expressed. Throughout his illness the adversary of souls was kept at a distance from him; or if in any instance his approach was permitted, it was not to attack the foundation of his hope, but only to distress him with the fear that it was possible, notwithstanding his assurance, he had never built upon it. A fear this which the hypocrite is seldom troubled with, for he is too much in love with his delusion.

Conversing with me about the trying moment, I repeated to him those encouraging promises, Deut. xxxiii. 5. *As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.* Heb. xiii. 5. *I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee.* I observed from them that God bestows the favours of his love but when the circumstances of his people renders them absolutely necessary, and only gives them strength answerable to their present trial, and when death comes they shall find grace sufficient for the day.

With

With an expressive cheerfulness he looked me in the face, and readily replied, "I do believe it. I have thus far found it so, and I have no doubt that I shall still experience it to be the case." Thus he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, and his example illustrated the truth of the divine promise, I. Peter ii. 5. *He that believeth in him shall not be confounded.*

Accordingly within an hour of his death with a faltering tongue he desired his weeping father to go to prayer with him. After prayer he was asked if he remembered one of the promises before referred to, and what he now thought concerning it? He replied he did, and his thoughts were the same now as before. His experience thus gave testimony to the faithfulness of a performing God, and therefore with serenity on his countenance, and without a sigh, he closed his eyes in death, and saw his Redeemer in glory.

Is there not reason then to congratulate the mourning parents and affectionate relatives of this blessed saint? In that glory doubtless he is. God has put a distin-

guished honour upon you his parents. Under your care he was trained up for the kingdom of glory, and now is in the full possession of its unbounded pleasures. Indulge therefore the pleasing thought of his present situation, *and sorrow not as those who have no hope.* § The mortal part of your child it is true is dead, but *your Redeemer liveth.* In him is a sufficiency to make up the loss, and he lives to support you under it.

I almost fear addressing myself to the surviving brothers and sister of the dear deceased. Their tender passions I know are such that they can hardly bear it. You have my affectionate sympathy while I feel for myself; but permit me to observe that when grief is immoderate it is offensive to the eyes of God, and may provoke him to repeat the painful stroke. 'Tis your duty therefore to endeavour to check the gushes of passion, and keep it within its due bounds. Be earnest in your applications to a throne of grace, and seek for relief to a covenant-God, who has graciously declared for the comfort of his people *that in all their afflictions*

ons he is afflicted. † You loved your brother. Where would love with him but in a world of ineffable bliss? Surely the consideration of his happiness then must afford you real pleasure! Instead of pondering therefore upon the painful truth *that he is absent from the body*, whenever you remember him admit the soul-reviving truth, *that he is present with the Lord.* ‡ If his company afforded you pleasure upon earth be concerned to follow him so far as he followed Christ, lest an eternal separation should aggravate your present distress by the despairing reflections of eternal misery. Nothing but an interest in the same Saviour who has redeemed his soul from the dreadful consequences of sin can secure and comfort you in a dying hour.

It gives me pleasure to hope that you are convinced of this, and that the present affliction has increased your desires after the one thing needful, and it is my prayer such desires may never be extinguished. *There is a friend* remaineth *that sticketh closer than a brother*, § who is both able and willing to satisfy them.

If

† Isaiah lxiii. 9. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 8. § Prov. xviii. 24.

If the present afflictive stroke is a mean of increasing your intimacy with him you will have reason to say, "It was good for us that we were afflicted." ||

I cannot pass unnoticed the affectionate relative, whose visit has been attended with such contrary scenes. You came here in full expectation of pleasure, but the most distressing pains have disappointed your hope, and cast a tremendous gloom upon the enjoyments of friendship. This, my dear friend, is only a specimen of what you are continually to meet with while passing through life, and while the present providence teaches the vanity of all earthly pleasure it loudly calls upon you to seek those things which are above. Nothing but the delights of the heavenly world can afford you solid happiness; and nothing but the well-grounded hopes of them can support you under the distresses of the present life. You are taught by the death of your friend that the only way to obtain this felicity is by faith in a living Redeemer. 'Tis my fervent prayer that the instruction may not be in vain.

But

But the providence which occasions the solemnities of this day is also affectionately felt and sincerely mourned by the family present who stand in a nearer relation to the deceased. It is to you my friends like the knife of a surgeon laying open an old wound. It revives the remembrance of former sorrows, while every circumstance attending the preceding breach in your family is mustered up

By busy meddling memory
In barbarous succession.

I sincerely feel for you under the painful trials, but God is still the same, and the affection of a Redeemer is able to relieve you. 'Tis my hope and prayer that, while your afflictions are repeated, and the clouds return after the rain, you may fly to a covenant God for refuge, obtain the possession of spiritual consolation, converse with heavenly realities, experience the anticipations of future glory, and an increasing preparation for the inheritance of the saints in light.

But is not the death of our friend, which is so universally lamented a common

mon loss, by which we are each one of us addressed with the solemn advice. "*Prepare to meet thy God.*" † In a particular manner it conveys a most striking lecture to the younger part of this congregation. It teaches the uncertainty of life, it shews what Christianity can do, and urges an immediate application to the Lord Jesus Christ. If youth, good natural abilities, a friendly disposition, and a temper universally amiable could secure from the stroke of death our deceased brother had been now alive.

If natural qualifications and moral performances could of themselves intitle to the divine favour, you will all of you acknowledge there would have been no necessity for him to have renounced himself, and made the righteousness of Christ his only plea.

Hence then you may learn the uncertainty of creature-enjoyments, and the absolute necessity of an appropriating faith in a living Redeemer. 'Tis this alone which can render us comfortable while surrounded with the numerous ills which flesh is heir to. 'Tis this alone can compose the spirits in a dying moment,

ment, and cause us to triumph over the grave.

There are many of you did in reality love him. His departure has affected you with a conviction how vain are the expectations of earthly happiness, and I hope revived in your minds a sense of the necessity of an interest in eternal felicity.

If destitute of the influence of the spirit such impressions will be transitory, and when time shall set the providence at a distance they will be worn away. O then pray to God that they may be effectual and lasting ! It would be dreadful indeed, if after such a warning as this, you should return *as the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.* *

O then be concerned to guard against such an issue, and pray, I say again, that your present convictions may never die away, but that you may continually feel the influence of that important advice, which this dispensation speaks, and is spoken also in the language of inspiration. “ Girdup the loins of your minds ; §
“ be sober, be vigilant ; for your adversary,

* 2 Pet. ii. 22. § 1 Pet. i. 13.

“fary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring
 “lion, seeking whom he may devour.”†
 Upon the whole then

Our Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand
 the latter day upon the earth. That day
 is fast approaching. Let us anticipate its
 joys while we indulge the pleasing expecta-
 tion. Thus animated we shall become
 superior to all the light afflictions of time.
 They are but momentary compared with
 future glory.

It is but a night, a dark and moonless
 night which will usher in eternal day.

Delightful consideration that our re-
 deemer lives and will soon appear, with a
 glorious retinue of saints and angels! Our
 dear friend I doubt not will make one of
 his train. We shall then see him not
 afflicted with pale disease, nor disfigured
 by emaciating sickness, but clothed with
 immortal life, chearfulness in his counte-
 nance, joy inspiring his heart, and his per-
 son adorned with the bright splendor of
 eternal glory. Happy meeting! never
 more to be separated.—*For so shall we ever
 be with the Lord.‡*

† 1 Pet. v. 8. ‡ 1 Thes. iv. 17